



17555 PEAK AVENUE MORGAN HILL, CALIFORNIA 95037

CITY OF MORGAN HILL
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING
March 16, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hardt-Mason called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

Present: Chair Hardt-Mason, Vice Chair Leiser, Commissioner Cheek, Commissioner van Keulen;
Absent: Commissioner Aragon

DECLARATION OF POSTING OF AGENDA

Chair Hardt-Mason certified that the meeting agenda was duly noticed and posted in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeff Dixon, president of the Morgan Hill Youth Sports Alliance, spoke about how his organization recently awarded \$2,000 to various students who participated in the "Sports in Life Essay Contest." A total of 14 children participated. Dixon said they wrote "great essays about sports." The MHYSA is also working on forming a BMX and skate club and is generating interest among parents and local kids for this endeavor. The MHYSA is also developing a Community Sports Calendar which is now on the Web. Dixon said that the challenge is to get dates from all the leagues and to maintain the information to keep it current.

The Advisory Council of the MHYSA meets once a quarter and would like to have a Parks and Recreation Commission member participate. Vice Chair Leiser said she would be interested in filling that role.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner van Keulen made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Cheek seconded the motion. Motion carried (4:0)

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 19, 2010.

Vice Chair Leiser made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner van Keulen seconded the motion. Motion carried (4:0).

BUSINESS

2. MEET MHUSD SUPERINTENDENT, DR. WES SMITH

Recommended Actions: 1) discuss opportunities for the MHUSD and the City to develop mutually beneficial joint projects to enhance youth recreational opportunities; 2) discuss opportunities for the MHUSD and the City to better use their respective facilities to enhance the community's quality of life, and 3.) discuss opportunities for encouraging volunteer involvement that mutually benefits Morgan Hill schools and also creates recreational opportunities for residents.

Commissioner Cheek introduced Morgan Hill Unified School Superintendent Dr. Wes Smith to the Parks and Recreation Commissioners, saying that in the recent past, the PRC and the school district have not shared effective communication even though schools are an important issue that comes up in nearly every PRC meeting. Dr. Smith expressed thanks for being invited and shared his hopes to develop a more engaging communication between the school and the PRC. He said he saw "a value in having a liaison with the PRC and the schools." One of his concerns was the epidemic of childhood obesity in the United States which he said is the second leading killer. He would like to develop programs between the schools and the city to help encourage local children to be active and to reduce obesity. He also discussed opportunities to use city and school swimming pools more effectively to provide opportunities to allow youngsters to learn to swim as well as compete in swim teams. Smith also described the "Field of Dreams" large sports complex in his last district and compared it to Morgan Hill's soccer fields at the Sports Complex. He said that "Morgan Hill is primed for a huge baseball sports complex" and encouraged a city-school district endeavor to create a similar "Field of Dreams" stadium. He was this would be a large draw to the community, bringing people from various parts of the region to play baseball and softball in this complex. Superintendent Smith said he would like to continue "moving forward" in developing more communication between the city and school district to develop parks and recreation programs.

Commissioner van Keulen welcomed Superintendent Smith and said that in the past, there was always a person from the school district involved with the PRC. He said he saw a great benefit from a strong relationship. Commissioner van Keulen said he would be willing to step forward and be the PRC liaison with the school district.

Commissioner Cheek said that he was impressed with how Superintendent Smith has been active in getting to meet people in the community and develop communication with them and listen to their concerns. He said he sees during the financial crisis where both schools and the city are laying off staff and cutting service the opportunity for the community to help prevent a loss of quality of life in the city. The key to this will be to encourage more volunteering from local citizens. Commissioner Cheek also said he saw opportunities to develop theater arts, photography, video, sports and other life-enhancing activities for youngsters through this endeavor.

Commissioner Leiser described the lack of baseball fields in Morgan Hill. She said the community can find ways to have schools better use the parks that are adjacent to them for sports activities. She also said that the City and the school district can better use both parks and school fields for community and student recreation during off-school hours.

COMMENT CARDS:

Brad Leach, the boy's tennis coach at Live Oak High School, described how he is involved in helping create the Youth Tennis Program for the Morgan Hill Tennis Club. He sees a lack of youth involvement in tennis at the high school, saying he is "lucky to get 10 boys on court." The same goes for Sobrato High School, he said. Tennis is part of the junior high school sports, too. He hopes that the City Council and the school district get more involved with the Morgan Hill Tennis Club to promote youth tennis teams. A club house "would be nice" to have in the city, he said. The City and school district should make tennis more available to youngsters in Morgan Hill.

Stacy Camiel participated in creating the Morgan Hill Aquatics Strategic Plan which looked at city and school swimming pool facilities and sought to develop a broader aquatics program using them. The plan found a way to coordinate the youth of the community and use all swim facilities and students to develop a youth swim program. She sees plenty of ideas to jointly use resources and develop swim programs.

Dennis Kennedy of the Morgan Hill Aquatics Foundation described a history and strong tradition of developing all-American high school and college swimmers in Morgan Hill. The city once used Live Oak High School and Britton School's swimming pools, but that situation "broke down." The Aquatics Center fills the need now. The Aquatics Foundations has a goal to support all the aquatics programs in Morgan Hill. Mr. Kennedy asked Dr. Smith to partner with the Aquatics Foundation to promote greater use of all the pools for the benefit of Morgan Hill's youth and other residents.

Jeff Dixon, president of the Morgan Hill Youth Sports Alliances, encouraged the school district and the City to facilitate programs to allow more children to participate in sports. He also encouraged greater partnership between the City and the school district – including better scheduling of sports fields. He recommended combining the scheduling efforts instead of going through separate entities.

Victor Gaxiola, president of Volunteer Morgan Hill, described the Leadership Morgan Hill class of 2009's Volunteer Fair class project which inspired the Volunteer Morgan Hill non-profit organization, currently under the umbrella of the Morgan Hill Community Foundation. He would like to encourage local students to more volunteering role, saying he "wants this to be a part of the fabric of their everyday lives." Volunteer Morgan Hill is committed to developing the spirit of volunteerism on all levels of the community, he said.

Jon Mockabee, president of the Morgan Hill Tennis Club told PRC members and Superintendent Smith that his organization would like to establish a Youth Tennis Association patterned after the successful Gilroy Tennis Club's youth tennis league which is a partnership between the Gilroy Unified School District and the City of Gilroy. In 2009, Gilroy added grammar school students to the program. The United States Tennis Association supplies the equipment for free and the tennis club offers tennis training for free to all students who wish to participate in the sport. He believes a similar program should be implemented in Morgan Hill

Superintendent Smith addressed the various comments. He would like to see development of youth sports programs that will get more young people involved in sporting activities. The school district is cutting programs due to the current financial crisis, and he sees the opportunity to create supplement

sports programs run by volunteers. This would include tennis, golf, swimming and other sports. He would like to make sure every child in Morgan Hill learns to swim – such as giving every third grader the opportunity to enjoy swim lessons. He believes that swim lessons will encourage a life-long interest in this activity as well as teach the child water safety. Swim lessons will encourage kids to later try out for the swim team and bolster support for the sport. Superintendent Smith is interested in more dialogue with the Morgan Hill Tennis Club leaders in developing a Youth Tennis League through the United State Tennis Association.

3. PROPOSED 2010/11 – 2014/15 CIP, Karl Bjarke, Public Works

Recommended Actions: 1) review the proposed CIP Parks and Public Facilities projects for FY 10/11 through FY 14/15 and 2) provide recommendations to Staff and City Council.

Karl Bjarke presented to the PRC members an overview of the stages of development of various park facilities and public facilities that the City of Morgan Hill is now working on. Park projects included the Butterfield Boulevard Linear Park, Parks Land Purchases, the West Little Llagas Creek Trail, Community Park Improvements, Open Space Acquisitions, Downtown Public Places and Parkways, the El Toro Trail, Bicycle Infrastructure, and the Madrone Channel Trail. Total projected costs for all the projects from 2010 to 2015 is expected to run \$12,688,000. Public Facilities projects include the Civic Center, the Community and Cultural Center Landscape Conversion, and the Aquatics Center. Total projects costs for all these projects from 2010 to 2015 is expected to run \$6,812,000.

The commissioners discussed the status of park land acquisition. It is too early to provide details, but the City is looking into various large parcels and will come up with recommendations for purchase in December 2010. Commissioner Leiser recommended buying lands adjacent or close to schools for parks. The Commissioners also recommended to Mr. Bjarke that community volunteers be used to replace the 24,000 square feet of turf at the Community and Cultural Center with low-water-use landscaping. This would help to cut down on the labor costs of this project. The El Toro Trail up El Toro mountain is now being developed. Community volunteers will be used as labor to create and maintain this switch-back trail.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Public Works Deputy Director Mori Stuve will be retiring from the city of Morgan Hill on May 7, 2010. He thanked the PRC for the constructive time he had with them. He has been with the city for 10 years of his 33 years in working in Public Works departments. Various PRC members made comments thanking Mr. Stuve for his dedicated service over the years.

Commissioner Leiser said that the PRC should review the Work plan and set specific projects to follow-up on. She also said she would like to serve as the liaison for the Morgan Hill Youth Sports Alliance organization.

Commissioner Cheek said Chris Ghione told him that no skateboard park safety or security incidents have occurred in the last two months. Commissioner Cheek said that he is frustrated by the failure in communication between him and the Morgan Hill Police Department in reporting on any safety and security incidents. He suggested he would discuss the matter with Police Chief Bruce Cummings and

recommended that if the Morgan Hill Police Department does not want to participate in providing a status report on the park, the PRC should decided to end contact with the police on this matter.

FUTURE COMMISSION INITIATED AGENDA ITEMS:

Note: in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2(a), there shall be no discussion, debate and/or action taken on any request other than providing direction to staff to place the matter of business on a future agenda.

Chair Hardt-Mason requested that the Morgan Hill Unified School District liaison report be placed on the next agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Hardt-Mason adjourned the meeting **at 8:33 p.m.** to the next Regular Parks & Recreation Commission meeting on **May 18, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.** in City Council Chambers, City Hall, 17555 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill.

MINUTES RECORDED and PREPARED BY:

PRC COMMISSIONER MARTIN CHEEK